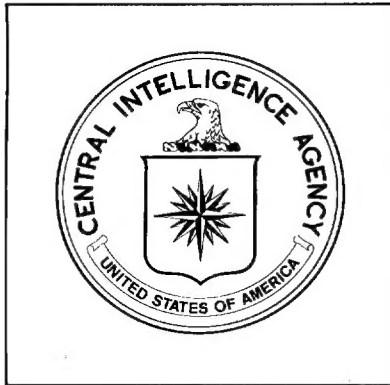


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LATIN AMERICAN TRENDS

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Western Hemisphere Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Venezuelan-Jamaica: Oil and Bauxite Agreement

Caracas has agreed to supply part of Jamaica's petroleum on credit terms similar to those already granted Central America. The \$100 million oil subsidy will cover a declining volume of imports each year for the next six years. About \$26 million will be available in 1975, equal to 10-15 percent of the estimated value of oil imports. The credits will finance the difference between \$6.00 and the market price of Venezuelan crude. The six-year notes will be held by the Jamaican Central Bank and can be converted to 25-year development loans at 8 percent interest for projects approved by the Venezuelan government. In addition, Venezuela agreed to sell Jamaica its remaining oil imports under regular commercial terms.

In keeping with President Perez' policy of supporting other raw material producers and to gain access to bauxite and alumina supplies for a large aluminum complex Caracas is now developing, Venezuela also reportedly agreed to purchase 400,000 tons of bauxite annually for 3 years, 500,000 tons for the following 7 years, and 200,000 tons of alumina for 10 years. Caracas also was offered 10 percent participation in a planned alumina plant in Jamaica, and Kingston in turn was offered equivalent terms for a new aluminum plant in Venezuela.

To implement the agreement with Jamaica, Caracas reneged on earlier arrangements with Surinam for joint exploration and refining of bauxite. Crude oil shipments to Surinam on favorable credit terms are still planned, however. Questions of continued political stability after Surinam gains independence this year and a surer bauxite supply from Jamaica seem primarily responsible for President Perez' decision. (SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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Ecuador: Reopening the Political Prisoner Controversy

The military regime's hypersensitivity to opposition seems undiminished by its critics' new and increasingly credible charges of government harassment. In fact, the government has resorted to a little-used tactic in exiling the national director of the Conservative Party, Julio Cesar Trujillo, to a remote military post in the jungle. Trujillo was charged with holding an unauthorized political meeting and writing a pamphlet that allegedly slandered a cabinet minister.

Banishment to the jungle was a more common fate for opponents of the government during the two years following its taking power in February 1972. For about a year now, however, there have been no known political prisoners. Socialist leader Gonzalo Oleas Zambrano, the last political prisoner of importance prior to the current spate of criticism, was released from jungle confinement in May 1974. His release resulted at least in part from a strong public outcry against the denial of due process and political imprisonment in general.

Although Trujillo lacks the following of Oleas, the press is almost certain to make an issue of the case. This in turn may tempt the government to intensify its campaign against journalists, at least two of whom have been arrested recently. At that point, editorialists such as Julio Prado, who is writing from underground to evade an arrest order, would surely reiterate their charge of government harassment. This cycle is likely to continue until the regime either tempers its reaction or cracks down hard enough to silence public criticism.
(SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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Colombia: Labor Reformer Reelected--With Reservations

The unexpectedly discordant reelection of Tulio Cuevas as president of Colombia's largest labor confederation may foreshadow a slowing of the organization's leftward drift.

Since he was first elected president of the Union of Colombian Workers (UTC) in 1963, Cuevas has gradually liberalized the organization, guiding it away from its traditional Roman Catholic ties and occasionally allying it in the past with Communist labor groups. Cuevas has always been careful to promote only programs with great appeal to the rank-and-file, thus virtually guaranteeing the grudging support of more conservative UTC leaders. Over the years, his tactics, as well as his programs, have increasingly antagonized the UTC hierarchy, although his popularity with the masses has never diminished.

Cuevas' present reelection was by the narrowest margin of his tenure, and the congress at which the balloting took place was the most contentious in recent memory. After the vote, the main opposition candidate and the eight unions supporting him walked out, announcing their intention not to participate in affairs of the UTC except to try to reform it. This will strengthen Cuevas' control of the organization, but his base will be somewhat diluted, particularly if the dissidents form a splinter confederation.

For the first time, Cuevas seems to recognize the existence of a threat to his position and to the integrity of the UTC. Prior to the election, he tried to work out a single compromise slate of candidates incorporating as broad an ideological spectrum as possible. The failure of that effort, combined with the apparent defection of the dissidents, is likely to subdue Cuevas in the future. He can be expected to show less progressive zeal and more conciliation in formulating UTC policy and particularly in dealing with the remainder of the UTC leadership. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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Cuba: Ambassador to Colombia

Fernando Ravelo Renedo, an experienced intelligence officer, has been named Cuban ambassador to Colombia.

Ravelo is the third Cuban with an intelligence background to have been named recently to head an embassy in Latin America; Jose Alfredo Garcia Bertran was assigned to Panama following the resumption of relations last August, and Norberto Hernandez Curbelo was recently appointed ambassador to Venezuela. These appointments underscore the influence of Manuel Pineiro Losada, chief of the Party's American Department, in the conduct of Cuban foreign policy. They also, underline the subordination to the party apparatus of the office within the Ministry of Foreign Relations responsible for the Western Hemisphere.

The 37-year-old Ravelo's career in the Interior Ministry's General Intelligence Directorate began in 1964. He subsequently worked as an assistant to Pineiro in the Liberation Directorate--the institution formerly responsible for Cuban subversion in Latin America--where he helped oversee intelligence activities in Panama, Brazil, and Uruguay. In 1973 he was given his first diplomatic post as minister counselor and deputy chief of mission in Buenos Aires.

Despite Ravelo's background, Cuban embassy personnel in Colombia are likely to be circumspect in any intelligence activities they undertake for several reasons:

--Havana does not want to damage the recently restored relations with Bogota.

--Colombian security forces are likely to keep close tabs on the Cubans, particularly in view of local concern over ongoing insurgent activities.

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--The Castro regime does not want to be detected in adventures that could be trumpeted as evidence that Cuba is still "exporting the revolution," especially now that the process of Cuba's emergence from hemisphere isolation appears to be gaining momentum.

Nevertheless, clandestine contact with guerrilla groups could take place, and the Cubans may even provide funds and technical assistance such as passports and other documentation otherwise unavailable to the guerrillas. A low-level effort will be made to establish a liaison with student, labor, and peasant groups.
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Brazil: Vietnamese Refugees

The prospects for securing active Brazilian assistance in the resettlement of large numbers of Vietnamese refugees do not appear bright. The non-committal response to Embassy approaches on this subject reflects a substantial lack of enthusiasm for the idea.

Another, perhaps more significant indication comes from an influential Rio de Janeiro newspaper, which sometimes expresses official views. On May 2 the paper referred to a Foreign Ministry statement pointing out the "lack of any political motive" for Brazil to help solve a problem it did not create.

Indeed, Brasilia undoubtedly perceives strong motives for not helping the US. For one thing, the administration may well feel that to assist in any way with the refugee problem could harm Brazil's image in the Third World, by identifying Brasilia, however remotely, with the war in Indochina. Moreover, the current situation provides a perfect opportunity for Brazil to make a conspicuous show of its independence of the US, at little cost to its relations with this country.

The practical problems of absorbing an influx of aliens, ill prepared linguistically and in most cases professionally, to make their own way in a new environment, are, of course, very real. If and when the government formally decides in the negative, it is likely to point to such problems as the reason behind the refusal. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Argentina: Increasing Censorship

The Argentine government has started to ban the circulation of books it deems "subversive." According to a respected Buenos Aires newspaper, the Office of Communications recently prohibited the mailing of several works, including the classic Cuba, Our America, and the United States by Jose Marti. This move constitutes an "about face" for the Peronist leaders, who following their return to power in March 1973 lifted all censorship restrictions on books and magazines that had been in force under the preceding military governments of Ongania, Levingston, and Lanusse.

At the same time right-wing terrorists, whose activities are tacitly supported by Mrs. Peron, have forced the suspension of the prestigious Panorama magazine, a weekly publication similar in format to Time and Newsweek. The suspension occurred when the publishers, along with several other writers and artists, left Argentina two weeks ago after receiving assassination threats. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Trinidad-Tobago: Strikes End - Conference Begins

The strikes that had crippled the key petroleum and sugar industries ended late last month with no final resolution of the issues that caused them, but it is clear that the government of Prime Minister Eric Williams emerged on top in both cases. Instead of the more than 100 percent wage increase that the oil workers had demanded from the Texaco affiliate, they eventually accepted the company's offer of a 25 percent interim increase plus a bonus of 6 percent of 1974 wages, with the other outstanding issues to be settled by the labor courts. The sugar workers' dispute, which involved issues such as legal recognition of unions and profit-sharing, in addition to wages, will also be dealt with by the courts, and the workers have returned to their jobs.

Williams also used the oil workers' strike to achieve his goal of securing public support for taking over Texaco's distribution operations, and for obtaining partial control of the company's 300,000-barrel-per-day refinery--Texaco's major asset in Trinidad. According to a high-level government official, Williams intends to nationalize all of Texaco's holdings eventually.

Williams' antipathy to multinational corporations in general was the major theme of his speech to the 16th session of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America, which opened in Port of Spain on May 6. As chairman of the conference, Williams lost no time in launching his attack and proposing the creation of a center to monitor the activities of all multi-nationals in Latin America. (SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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Netherlands Antilles: Local Election Results

Unofficial returns from the elections on Curacao, Aruba, and Bonaire on April 25 indicate no major surprises (see April 23 Staff Notes) but may foreshadow some significant policy changes for the three Dutch dependencies. Approximately 85 percent of the registered voters cast ballots.

Curacao "Papa" Godett's leftist Workers Liberation Front won a plurality that apparently gives it 8 of the 21 seats in the Curacao Island Council. Before the election, Godett said that if his party won a plurality but not a majority he would prefer to form a governing coalition with the Democratic Party and might even consider an alliance with the National People's Party or the Social Democratic Party.

If he emerges with control of the council, Godett will have the power to create considerable mischief on Curacao and the other islands. He would be likely to demand and get a minimum of two ministerial posts in the Netherlands Antilles central government. Prime Minister Evertsz would attempt to isolate Godett's men but, as a minimum price for their participation in his cabinet, he would have to accept some leftist policy initiatives. If economic conditions do not improve before the next general elections in mid-1977, Godett's socialist rhetoric and popular but impractical schemes could increase his appeal and catapult him into a leadership role in the central government.

Aruba The People's Electoral Movement, apparently winning 13 of the 21 seats in the Aruba Island Council, has a clear mandate to press ahead with its demand that Aruba cut its ties with the central government of the Netherlands Antilles. Pressure from The Hague, concessions from the central government, as well as internal party differences may still prevent separation.

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Bonaire The incumbent Bonaire Patriotic Union has apparently captured only 4 of the 9 seats in that island's council, but it should be able to negotiate an alliance enabling it to continue governing much as it has. (SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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Cuban Chronology For April 1975

- April 1: Canadian delegation headed by Health Minister Marc Laloude arrives in Havana.
- Cuban National Bank Minister President Raul Leon Torras arrives in Prague for economic talks.
- Kuwaiti Foreign Minister is quoted as saying Castro will visit the Middle East in the "near future."
- Icelandic ambassador Haraldur Kroyer presents credentials to President Dorticos.
- April 2: Cuban Minister of Tourism Vivian Coll attends first conference of Caribbean tourism directors in Santo Domingo.
- Fidel sends solidarity message to Portugal's Goncalves via PCC Central Committee member Jesus Montane Oropesa.
- April 3: Cuba, GDR sign cultural, scientific cooperation agreement.
- Cuba announces appointment of Roberto Valdes Munoz as ambassador to Laos.
- Cuba's national poet Nicolas Guillen arrives in Caracas at invitation of Venezuelan writers.
- April 4: Cuba, Canada sign public health cooperation agreement.

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April 5: Officials of the Cuban Ministry of Merchant Marine and Ports travel to Mexico for discussions on the creation of the proposed multinational shipping company in the Caribbean.

April 7-11: Prime Minister Forbes Burnham of Guyana visits Cuba.

April 9: Cuban agrarian reform delegation arrives in Guyana.

April 10: Official text of draft constitution published in Granma following modification and approval "in principle" by Political Bureau.

Delegation of radio and television administrators from Hungary arrives in Havana.

April 11: Delegation of Salvadoran deputies and journalists arrives in Havana. Invited by Cuban Institute for Friendship with Peoples.

Exchange of ambassadors with Spain is announced. Cuban ambassador is Carlos E. Alfaras, the current ambassador to Egypt.

April 12: Hungarian internal trade minister arrives in Havana. Trade agreement with Hungary signed April 16.

Caracas' El Mundo reports that Fidel Castro will visit Caracas in late May "after the respective embassies are installed in Havana and Caracas."

April 14: Cuba, Albania sign scientific, cultural, educational cooperation protocol for 1975-1976.

Cuba-Guyana joint communique released in Havana.

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April 15: Cuban agricultural delegation arrives in Jamaica headed by Jose Solona Pinera, vice president of INRA.

Laura Allende arrives in Havana.

April 15-25: Cuban cultural delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister Belarmino Castilla Mas arrives in Mexico.

April 16: Political Bureau announces first party congress to be held in December. Also announces makeup of Congress' Central Preparatory Committee.

April 17: Yemeni public works minister heads delegation arriving in Havana.

Cuba-USSR sign annual shipping protocol.

National Bank of Cuba and Foreign Bank of Spain sign \$900 million general finance agreement.

April 18: Venezuelan Community Action Foundation delegation headed by Sonia Perez arrives in Havana.

April 19: Playa Giron Anniversary. No major address.

April 21: Zambian President Dr. Kenneth Kaunda pays official visit to Cuba.

Cuban PCC Central Committee delegation headed by Juan Marinello arrives in Moscow to participate on selection committee for Lenin Peace Prizes.

Hungarian Communist youth delegation arrives in Havana.

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April 21-24: Latin American Sugar Producers meet in Dominican Republic. Cuban delegation headed by Foreign Trade Vice Minister Ricardo Cabrizas Ruiz.

April 21: Portuguese military delegation arrives in Havana.

April 22: Multinational Shipping Pact signed in Caracas.

April 23: Cuban National Ballet arrives in Caracas.

Bert Ramelson, heading delegation of Communist Party of Britain, arrives in Havana.

April 24: Portuguese Foreign Affairs Ministry reports that Minister Ernesto Augusto de Melo Antones will make an official visit to Cuba.

USG approves issuance of export license to Canadian firm for sale of \$200,000 worth of office furniture to Cuba.

April 25: A Cuban CTC delegation arrives in Caracas to attend 7th Congress of Confederation of Workers of Venezuela as guests.

April 26: Cuban-Zambian joint communique signed in Havana.

Cuba names Jose Lopez Sanchez ambassador to Bangladesh.

Cuba and Mexico sign sugar production co-operation agreement.

April 27: Cuban Minister of Justice Dr. Armando Torres Santrayil arrives in Budapest on official visit to Hungary.

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April 28 Wives of ambassadors stationed in Mexico
- May 5: City, and key Mexican women visit Cuba
 at the invitation of the FMC.

April 28: Zambia Daily Mail carries report from
 Havana stating that Foreign Minister
 Vernon Mwaanga had delivered special mes-
 sage to Castro from Secretary Kissinger.

April 29: Cuban and Soviet Academies of Science sign
 cooperation agreement.

 Discussion of draft constitution begins in
 work centers.

April 30: Governments of Cuba and Colombia announce
 Ramiro Andrade Teran will be Colombian
 ambassador to Cuba; Fernando Ravelo Renedo
 will represent Cuba in Bogota.

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